

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A support stick for a food item having a central core section, said support stick comprising:

an upper section having two or more generally upwardly extending arms forming a chamber therebetween, said two or more arms configured to be inserted into said food item and securely grasp said central core section of said food item; and

a lower section abutting said upper section, at least a portion of said lower section configured to extend outwardly from said food item, said lower section comprising a handle.

2. The support stick according to claim 1, wherein said food item is a stone fruit.

3. The support stick according to claim 1, wherein said food item is a pome fruit.

4. The support stick according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said two or more arms is elastic.

5. The support stick according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said two or more arms has one or more generally inwardly directed grasping members thereon.

6. The support stick according to claim 5, wherein said one or more grasping members are generally angled downward to improve grasping of said central core section by said two or more arms.

7. The support stick according to claim 6, wherein at least one of said two or more arms is elastic.

8. The support stick according to claim 1, wherein said two or more arms are in a generally U-shaped configuration.

9. A support stick for a food item having a central core section, said support stick comprising:

an upper section having two or more generally upwardly extending arms in a generally U-shaped configuration forming a chamber therebetween, at least one of said two or more arms being elastic, said two or more arms configured to be inserted into said food item and securely grasp said central core section of said food item; and

a lower section abutting said upper section, at least a portion of said lower section configured to extend outwardly from said food item, said lower section comprising a handle.

10. The support stick according to claim 9, wherein at least one of said two or more arms has one or more generally inwardly directed grasping members thereon.

11. A food product, comprising:

a food item having a central core section; and

a support stick attached to said food item, said support stick comprising an upper section and a lower section, said upper section having two or more generally upwardly extending arms forming a chamber therebetween, said two or more arms configured to be inserted into said food item and securely grasp said central core section of said food item, said lower section abutting said upper section, at least a portion of said lower section configured to extend outwardly from said food item, said lower section comprising a handle.

12. The support stick according to claim 11, wherein at least one of said two or more arms is elastic.

13. The support stick according to claim 11, wherein at least one of said two or more arms has one or more generally inwardly directed grasping members thereon.

14. The support stick according to claim 13, wherein said one or more grasping members are generally angled downward to improve grasping of said central core section by said two or more arms.

15. The support stick according to claim 14, wherein at least one of said two or more arms is elastic.

16. The support stick according to claim 11, wherein said two or more arms are in a generally U-shaped configuration.
17. A method of making a food product, comprising the steps of: providing a food item having a central core section; and inserting a support stick into said food item to securely grasp said central core section of said food item, said support stick comprising an upper section and a lower section, said upper section having two or more generally upwardly extending arms forming a chamber therebetween for securely grasping said central core section, said lower section abutting said upper section, at least a portion of said lower section configured to extend outwardly from said food item, said lower section comprising a handle.
18. The support stick according to claim 17, wherein at least one of said two or more arms is elastic.
19. The support stick according to claim 17, wherein at least one of said two or more arms has one or more generally inwardly directed grasping members thereon.
20. The support stick according to claim 19, wherein said one or more grasping members are generally angled downward to improve grasping of said central core section by said two or more arms.

21. The support stick according to claim 20, wherein at least one of said two or more arms is elastic.

22. The support stick according to claim 17, wherein said food item is dried prior to said providing step.

23. The support stick according to claim 17 further comprising the step of freezing said food product after said inserting step.

24. A method of making a food product, comprising the steps of:
providing a food item having a central core section;
removing said central core section from said food item;
drying said food item to form a dried fruit; and
compressing said dried fruit around a support stick, said support stick comprising an upper section and a lower section, at least a portion of said lower section configured to extend outwardly from said dried fruit, said lower section comprising a handle.

25. The support stick according to claim 24, wherein said upper section has two or more generally upwardly extending arms forming a chamber therebetween.

26. The support stick according to claim 25, wherein at least one of said two or more arms is elastic.

27. The support stick according to claim 25, wherein at least one of said two or more arms has one or more generally inwardly directed grasping members thereon.

28. A method of making a food product, comprising the steps of: providing a food item having a central core section; removing said central core section from said food item; drying said food item to form a dried fruit; and inserting a support stick into said dried fruit, said support stick comprising an upper section and a lower section, at least a portion of said lower section configured to extend outwardly from said dried fruit, said lower section comprising a handle.

29. The support stick according to claim 28 further comprising the step of compressing said dried fruit into a mass of dried fruit prior to said inserting step, wherein said inserting step inserts said support stick into said mass of dried fruit.

30. The support stick according to claim 28, wherein said upper section has two or more generally upwardly extending arms forming a chamber therebetween.

31. The support stick according to claim 30, wherein at least one of said two or more arms is elastic.

32. The support stick according to claim 31, wherein at least one of said two or more arms has one or more generally inwardly directed grasping members thereon.